# [Arizona Labor Camps]

of necessity, much
more reliance is placed by harvest hands on forms of amusement requiring a minimum of equipment and space: drinking, crap shooting, card playing, sexual indulgence.

Cotton pickers hauled from towns each day of course had recreational resources of those population centers at their disposal. They could attend church on Sunday. Farmers make little effort to provide access to churches for their employees in labor camps. For some cotton pickers racial discrimination is a problem. As one Negro woman at Marana said, "There's a church over there, all right. But we don't know if they take colored. We don't go." For Catholic Papagos as Catholic Mexican-Americans, this is no problem. But farmers don't provide Sunday transportation to trading towns. The Desert People stay in labor camps on the Sabbath, except for a few from San Xavier who can take a bus home for the day occasionally.

About half the Papago women in the camps do some washing on Sunday.[1] An occasional individual picks some cotton, but most simply loaf around camp with nothing constructive to occupy them. Sonora Catholics make their household shrines in a corner of their cabins, and use them. In labor camps where all residents are Papagos, or where there are many of the Desert People in a large camp, they take over an empty cabin to furnish a chapel where they can hold their services.[2] One far-sighted farmer who understood his Papago employees built a fine chapel for them when he constructed a new concrete block camp, but such understanding is indeed rare. Labor camp chapels seem to serve a quarter of the Papago harvest hands.[3]

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[1] Based on information from 8 families.

[2] "Sonora Catholicism antedates other Christian faiths on the Reservation today, for the belief and practice of Sonora Catholics are remants of the teachings of the early Spanish missionaries, acquired either directly from the padres, or through other Indians or Mexicans. During the generations when no Catholic clergy came to Papagueria and the nearest priests were far away in Mexico, the faithful carried on as best they could the ceremonies and devotions of the church.

"With the absence of priests and the passage of time, much of the Roman creed and ritual vanished. In the Sonora Catholic churches, for example, there are no Mass, no hymns and prayers in Latin, no confession, and no marriage ceremony. Children are baptised by godparents, and the people bury their own dead." Joseph, Spicer and Chesky, 1949, p. 81-82.

[3] Based on information from 8 families.